



NEWS RELEASE

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Actor Who Played Kia Dancing Hamster Pleads in Disability Fraud Case

A 29-year-old man who portrayed a dancing hamster in car commercials pleaded no contest yesterday to insurance fraud, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Leroy Barnes entered his no contest plea to one count each of insurance fraud and false statements regarding aid. Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Norm Shapiro immediately sentenced Barnes to 90 days of electronic monitoring. Barnes also was ordered to perform 400 hours of community service and pay more than \$24,000 in restitution.

Deputy District Attorney Richard Gallegly of the Healthcare Fraud Division prosecuted the case.

Barnes, best known for playing one of the hip-hop hamsters in the popular Kia car commercials, received state disability benefits between September 2010 and September 2011. During that time, Barnes defrauded the state by claiming he wasn't employed but was working on the Kia commercials, Gallegly said.

Case BA422409 was investigated by the California Department of Insurance.

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About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Last year, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](http://da.lacounty.gov) prosecuted more than 71,000 felony defendants and nearly 112,000 misdemeanor defendants.